

# the MEDDAC-Fort Carson Healthbeat

Serving the Front Range Military Family

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## It's time to flee the flu

Stacy Neumann  
MEDDAC Public Affairs

The 2011 flu vaccine is ready and it's time to make sure you and your loved ones don't get bitten by the bug. Seasonal flu is an extremely contagious respiratory infection. Symptoms include fever, cough, and body aches. It's estimated that the vaccine saves more than eight million lives every year.

The Centers for Disease Control report the 2011-2012 will protect you from three different virus strains, including the 2009 H1N1 virus. The CDC recommends getting your influenza vaccine before December. It takes two weeks to take effect and this ensures you have protective antibodies before the height of the flu season.

Only one shot is needed for most people for full protection. The exception is children from 6 months through 8 years old who never received at least one dose of the 2009 H1N1 vaccine or have never received a seasonal flu vaccine.

This year, health experts recommend vaccination for everyone six months and older but it's especially important for at-risk populations. Those include: people with chronic conditions or weakened immune systems, pregnant women, children younger than five, people older than 50, the elderly, people in



Immunization nurse Joe Root administers a vaccine to Erika Posey at the hospital's clinic.

nursing homes and health care workers. People who should not get a flu vaccine without first consulting their physician include: (Flu continued on page 4)

## What's the rush? Primary Care Clinics address your non-urgent needs



Col. Robert Rudolph  
Commentary

EACH Patient Centered Medical Home Leader

Evans Army Community Hospital and its clinics are undergoing a transformation of Primary Care!

Across the United States, civilian Emergency Departments often serve as the main source of routine health care for a growing segment of the

U.S. population. This is because some patients lack medical insurance or adequate access to primary care services.

This is not the case for the military beneficiaries at Fort Carson! Evans has a robust primary care service with same day appointments Monday through Friday to meet your needs and the needs of all our beneficiaries. Most exciting is the personal convenience the hospital and its outlying clinics now offer by adding evening hours and a familiar medical staff to care for your medical needs, even non-urgent medical concerns.

Currently, close to 70 percent of our hospital's ED visits are for non-urgent care, meaning the patient's assigned primary care clinic can more appropriately take care of the problem. When you are ill, your inclination may be to visit the ED for care. However, the ED is a place to seek medical treatment in the event of a true emergency; it is not

best suited to handle everyday illnesses.

Lieutenant Col. Sean Keenan is Evans hospital's Chief of the Department of Emergency Medicine. He and his ED staff are extremely proud to provide 24/7 care to the Fort Carson community. However, he reports, the waiting area is often clogged with patients who are better served by their own healthcare providers in their normal primary care clinics. This backlog can lead to longer ED wait times and a more frustrating experience for

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## *In The Spotlight: Breast Cancer Awareness Month*

# Vigilance urged during Breast Cancer Awareness Month

Kim Pfennig

Radiology Breast Clinic Coordinator

For most people, October is the month of ghosts and goblins, orange pumpkins and black cats. However, for many others, it's become the month to post your pink!

Pink is the color many charities use to raise awareness about breast cancer and raise money for research into its cause, diagnosis and cure. October is Breast Cancer Awareness Month and a good time to remember the importance of your yearly mammogram.

What are the benefits of yearly mammograms? The biggest benefit is the increase in early detection, especially with the use of digital technology. We are now able to diagnose most breast cancers before they have spread. Most cancers start in the breast ducts, the part of the breast that functions to carry milk. When caught early, this type of cancer is referred to as DCIS, ductal carcinoma in-situ, and is considered Stage 0. This is the most curable stage.

Recently, there has been much discussion in the media about how often and when to start screening mammograms. At Evans Army Community Hospital, we continue to follow the American Cancer Guidelines. These include: yearly mammograms starting at age 40 and continuing for as long as a woman is in good health, clinical breast exams about every 3 years for women in their 20s and 30s and every year for women 40 and over, and women should know how their breasts normally look and feel and report any breast change promptly to their health care provider.

Breast self-exam (BSE) is an option for women starting in their 20s. Women may begin screening mammograms earlier than 40 under certain circumstances. These include a first or second degree relative with breast cancer prior to age 50, a history of radia-



**Nurse Tamara McCullough explains the GE Digital Essential Mammography unit to Colette Montoya.**

tion to the chest area as a child, teen or young adult, a personal history of cancer, or a known BRCA (Breast Cancer) genetic mutation. You should remember that men can get breast cancer, too. Approximately one percent of newly diagnosed breast cancers, or almost 2,000 cases a year, are found in men.

Monthly self breast exams (SBE's) are also strongly encouraged by the Breast Imaging Clinical staff, radiologists, technologist and breast clinic nurse, starting at age 20. Most breast lumps are discovered by women performing SBE.

So what do you do if you find a lump? First of all, try not to panic. More than 80 percent are NOT cancerous. Normal breast tissue can have all kinds of normal structures which can be felt during a SBE. Fibrocystic breast tissue, very dense breast tissue, simple cysts and fibroadenomas are just some examples of conditions which can change the texture of breast tissue. Make an appointment with your Primary Care Manager for a clinical breast exam.

The most important thing to remember is to know your own breast

tissue! Being familiar with the normal structures and normal monthly changes if you are pre-menopausal is critical to performing SBE's. If you have nipple discharge not associated with pregnancy or breastfeeding, if there are skin changes like redness, crusting, dimpling or puckering, or if your nipple turns inward, you should also contact your Primary Care Manager.

The Breast Imaging Clinic in Evans Army Community Hospital provides digital mammography services for annual screenings, diagnostic evaluations, breast ultrasounds, and breast biopsies. The clinic hours are Monday through Friday from 7:15 a.m. to 4 p.m. Women may self-refer for annual screening mammograms as long as they have an on-post provider. Women who receive their medical care off-post may also take advantage of the modernized comfort of the new facility by simply bringing a written (or faxed) copy of a prescription from their provider. The Patient Appointment line is (719) 457-2273 or toll-free at (866) 422-7391.



## New pharmacy co-pays in effect for Tricare

Information from  
TRICARE

The amount you pay for some medications changes this month. It's all based on where you decide to fill your prescriptions.

Now, you won't pay anything for a 90-day supply of generic formulary drugs purchased through TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery. It used to cost \$3. "These new co-pays make using TRICARE Pharmacy Home Delivery more afford-



able than ever," said Rear Adm. Christine Hunter, TRICARE Management Activity deputy director. The copayment for brand name drugs bought through Home remains the same at \$9.

If you plan to get your

prescriptions filled at participating retail pharmacies, your copayment goes up. Generic co-pays rise from \$3 to \$5 while brand name drugs go from \$9 to \$12.

The cost of non-formulary medications will go from \$22 to \$25 in both retail and Home Delivery options. TRICARE says the use of Home Delivery has grown by nearly 10 percent over the last year.

## Recognizing ADHD in children

From the U.S. Army Public Health Command

Most healthy children occasionally have trouble sitting still, paying attention, or controlling impulses. Maybe you have noticed these behaviors in your own children. That's normal. But for some children, the problem is so bad that it interferes with

their daily lives at home, at school and in social settings. *"The best results occur when a team approach is used...."*

Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, or ADHD, is characterized by not being able to pay attention, hyperactivity (highly or excessively active) and impulsive behavior (acting without thinking first).

There are three identified types of ADHD. Here are the symptoms for each type.

A child who has the predominantly inattentive type of ADHD exhibits the following symptoms: Fails to give close attention to details or makes careless mistakes, has difficulty sustaining attention, does not appear to listen, struggles to follow through on instructions, has difficulty with organization, avoids or dislikes tasks requiring sustained mental effort, loses things, is easily distracted and is forgetful in daily activities.

A child who has the predominantly hyperactive-impulsive type of ADHD exhibits the following symptoms: Fidgets with hands or feet or squirms in chair, has difficulty remain-

ing seated, runs about or climbs excessively, has difficulty engaging in activities quietly, acts as if driven by a motor, talks excessively, blurts out answers before questions have been completed, has difficulty waiting or taking turns and interrupts or intrudes upon others. Finally, children who have the combined type of ADHD meet both sets of inattention and

hyperactive/impulsive criteria. There is no simple test to determine whether someone has ADHD. Diagnosis can be difficult and should be made

only by an expert after an extensive evaluation. This evaluation should include ruling out other possible causes for the symptoms, a physical examination, and a series of interviews with the individual and other key persons in the individual's life.

A diagnosis of ADHD can be very scary. However, with early diagnosis and the right treatment, including medication and appropriate counseling and behavior therapy, most children with ADHD grow up to be normal, successful adults. The best results usually occur when a team approach is used, with teachers, parents, therapists, doctors and nurses working together.

If you're concerned that your child is displaying signs of ADHD, talk to your pediatrician or primary care manager. Your doctor may refer you (ADHD continued on page 4)

## Parents: Autumn Tips to keep kids safe & healthy

From the Centers for Disease Control

Greet the fall with ways to help keep you and your family safe and healthy!

### Be active.

As the weather cools, resist the urge to hibernate! Make all yard work fun. Have kids come up with different way to pick up leaves or pine cones (i.e. squatting, bending, stretching or balancing on one foot). Provide kids with rakes and other tools that are kid-sized for comfort and safety.

For indoor fun, play board games and computer games that encourage physical activity. Have a song-and-dance talent show. Draw, color and explore with health in mind.

Remember that children and adolescents should be active for at least one hour a day, and adults should be active for at least 2 ½ hours a week. Don't forget to apply sunscreen and insect repellent to protect you and your family from the sun, mosquitoes, and ticks.

### Be safe at school.

Whether it is by bus, car, bike, or foot, the minute a child leaves their home, safety becomes a concern. Go over our child's transportation plan and discuss things your child can do to stay safe on the way to and from school. Also, make sure your child's school has update and accurate contact information for you

(Autumn Tips continued on page 4)

# FLU

(Cont. from page 1)



Nurse Vicki Konkrite gives an immunization in the Evans Immunization and Allergy Clinic.

people with an egg allergy, those who developed Guillain-Barre syndrome within six weeks of getting an influenza vaccine, babies younger than 6 months and those with a moderate-to-severe illness with a fever.

The Centers for Disease Control says the number one way to fight the flu is to get a vaccine. Beyond that, the CDC recommends frequent hand washing, avoiding sick people, and taking antiviral drugs if your doctor prescribes them.

TRICARE beneficiaries can visit their provider or participating TRICARE retail network pharmacies to get their free seasonal flu vaccine. Participating pharmacies are listed at [www.express-scripts.com/TRICARE](http://www.express-scripts.com/TRICARE).

## Cold or Seasonal Flu?

	COLD	SEASONAL FLU
FEVER	Rare	Common
COUGHING	Hacking, productive (mucous-producing) cough often present	Dry and hacking cough often present
ACHES	Slight aches and pains	Moderate body aches and pains
STUFFY NOSE	Commonly present and typically resolves within a week	Runny nose is commonly present
CHILLS	Uncommon	Mild to moderate
TIREDFNESS	Fairly mild	Moderate and more likely referred to as a lack of energy
SNEEZING	Common	Common
SUDDEN SYMPTOMS	Symptoms develop over a few days	Includes flushed face, loss of appetite, dizziness and or vomiting/nausea. Lasts about 4-7 days
HEADACHE	Uncommon	Fairly Common
SORE THROAT	Common	Common
CHEST DISCOMFORT	Mild to moderate	Moderate. If severe, seek medical attention at once

# ADHD

(Cont. from page 3)

to a specialist, but it's important to have a medical evaluation first to check for other causes of your child's difficulties. For more information on ADHD check the

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder website at [www.adhd.com/index.html](http://www.adhd.com/index.html) or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at [cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/](http://cdc.gov/ncbddd/adhd/)

## Autumn Tips

(Cont. from page 3)

and others in case of an emergency.

### Stay healthy.

The single best way to protect against the flu is to get vaccinated each year. October through December is the best time to get vaccinated. Practice good health habits. Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Wash your hands often with soap and water. Alcohol-based cleaners are also effective. Stay home if you get sick.

### Be prepared for cold weather.

Exposure to cold temperatures, whether indoors or outdoors, can cause serious or life-threatening health problems. Infants and the elderly are particularly at risk, but anyone can be affected. Know how to prevent cold weather-related health problems and what to do if a cold weather health emergency arises. Remember that using space heaters and fireplaces can increase the risk of household fires and carbon monoxide poisoning. Also, take time out to test and replace batteries in our smoke and carbon monoxide detectors.

### Have a safe and healthy Halloween.

For many families, Halloween is a fun time to wear costume, trick-or-treat, and spend some time with one another. Halloween can also be an opportunity to provide nutritious snacks, get physical activity, and focus on safety. Make sure kids stay safe by wearing well-fitting masks, costumes and shoes to avoid blocked vision, trips and falls. Trick-or-treaters should carry a flashlight to help them see and help others see them. Adults should examine all treats for choking hazards and tampering before children eat them.

## Laboratory renovations take aim at patient waiting time

Stacy Neumann  
MEDDAC Public Affairs

On average, a patient will spend about 10 minutes in Evans Army Community Hospital's laboratory. Lab managers think they can do even better.

The laboratory just completed a \$ 4.3 million makeover begun in April 2010. Now, managers say the renovation signs won't be the only thing that comes down.

"The patient will see a modernized, improved, and expanded waiting and phlebotomy (blood draw) areas. We are hoping to see a significant decrease in patient waiting times," said acting laboratory chief Col. Marc Labovich.

The introduction of a computerized patient monitoring system called Q-Flow is designed to speed things up for the approximately 300 beneficiaries processed every day.

Changes behind the scenes are also designed to increase efficiency at the laboratory. Technicians are working in a transformed open bay space, including new floors, furniture and work spaces.

Capt. Juan Guzman, Lab Manager, said, "We've been doing more work in less space as the Base Realignment

and Closure process brought more Soldiers to Fort Carson. It should go up more with the upcoming addition of the Combat Aviation Brigade.

Over the past five years, the laboratory's specimen workload has increased by at least 15,000 each year.

Guzman said the more than 12,000 square foot renovation and the updating of some of the lab equipment shows the staff is dedicated to serving beneficiaries.

He said, "We are constantly upgrading our platforms to provide them with the most reliable results. A good diagnosis depends on reliable lab results. We're committed to that."



**Technician Sonja Earle processes samples in the newly renovated Evans Army Community Hospital laboratory.**

## Primary Care (Cont. from page 1)

those who truly need ED's services.

The ED can be a very busy and, sometimes, scary place where unnecessary exposure to illness is not the only thing to avoid. The right place to receive most non-urgent care is in the comfortable setting of your primary care team.

Multiple studies show more unnecessary testing is done in EDs than by patients' primary care team. This makes sense. Since the ED's doctor does not know you, he or she has to start the medical evaluation from scratch, sometimes wasting time and resources, which can be frustrating for everyone involved. If a patient sees his or her primary care doctor, with whom a relationship is already developed, safer and more efficient care is assured. The ED is for the treatment of life-threat-

ening or very serious conditions requiring immediate medical attention.

Obviously, you should not ignore emergencies. If a situation seems life threatening, take action. Call 911 right away. If you are unsure, stop and think to yourself, can the condition that I'm experiencing be treated by my regular doctor, in his or her office? If so, this is probably the better option, unless you feel your life is threatened by the condition.

Another good reason to visit your assigned primary care clinic is that primary care is undergoing an exciting transformation by embracing the Patient-Centered Medical Home model of care. Throughout the Army the PCMH initiative is improving primary health-care access and quality. PCMH is built on: access, continuity, coordination

of care, comprehensive care, preventive care, and disease management.

PCMH delivers leading-edge health services to Soldiers and military Families by fostering and supporting a relationship between each patient and a single provider who offers care as part of a coordinated team of clinicians and nurses. With clinical pharmacists and behavioral health specialists integrated into the practice, the PCMH maximizes physical health, behavioral health and patient safety.

For fiscal year 2012, the major focus of primary care at Evans Army Community Hospital and its outlying clinics will be learning and then embracing the PCMH concept.

### MAKING & CANCELING APPOINTMENTS

Call Patient Appointment Services  
(719) 457-2273 or (866) 422-7391

Book online anytime  
[www.tricareonline.com](http://www.tricareonline.com)

**Don't be a no-show! If you book your appointment and can't make it, please cancel at least 24 hours in advance.**



## FOR YOUR INFORMATION

### Book Appointments Online

Did you know you can make your appointments online? Register for Tricare OnLine at [www.tricare.mil](http://www.tricare.mil). Registered users enjoy access to the following features: appointment booking, refills, online booking appointment for minors, laboratory results, and your personal health records. Access is power!

### Healthy Cooking

Want to learn how to make delicious and healthy food for you and your family? Join Chef Louis Borochaner from the Nutrition Care Department in the Evans Teaching Kitchen. Classes meet every third Thursday of the month from 12:30 to 1:30 pm.

### Child Care

When you make an appointment for yourself or one of your children, our providers want to focus on the care of the patient. For other children who do not have an appointment, Child, Youth and School Services offers hourly child care at Southwest Hourly Care Center on Titus Boulevard for a fee. **All children must be pre-registered with CYSS.** Registration is free. Hourly reservations can be made through Webtrac online or you can call (719) 526-2463. If you are in need of last minute child care (under 48 hours), you must call.

Spouses of deployed soldiers receive 16 free hours of respite care, per child, per month. The free child care is available from noon - 7 p.m. Reservations are required and can be made by calling (719) 524-4218.

### Beneficiary Feedback

We want to know how you feel about the service during your visit. Fill out an Interactive Customer Evaluation (ICE) card online or ask for a comment card from your service provider. If requested, we will contact you within 72 hours of its submission. You can find a link to the ICE card on Fort Carson's homepage: [www.carson.army.mil](http://www.carson.army.mil)

### Patient and Family Centered Care Advisory Council

Fort Carson MEDDAC is committed to strengthening the partnership between our providers, patients and their family members. Our PFCC Advisory Council ensures that the family's perspective is considered when developing policies and programs. If you would like to serve on the council, contact (719) 526-7733. The PFCC office is located in room 1025, across from the Coffee Shop/Cart and the hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 7:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

### Religious Services

Chaplains are available to patients and their families. They are trained in special hospital ministry. The chaplain can be reached at (719) 526-7386/7412 or through the hospital operator at (719) 526-7000. The Department of Ministry and Pastoral Care offices are located next to Healer Chapel on the first floor. A Prayer Box is located in the rear of the main chapel and prayer request can be made at any time. Cards are removed daily and shared with the ministry team.

### Walgreens Pharmacy & TRICARE

Walgreens has publicly announced it will stop participating in the Express Scripts pharmacy network, starting January 1, 2012. The prices Walgreen offered to Express Scripts for filling prescriptions would cost much more than other pharmacies filling the same prescriptions. This means the cost to TRICARE would increase. There are more than other pharmacies in the TRICARE network, excluding Walgreens and beneficiaries are urged to act now and change to a pharmacy that will continue to participate in the TRICARE network.

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